(d) No, Sir. The participation of the Chinese companies will bring competition in the bidding process and the prices of the main plant & equipments are likely to be more competitive, resulting in lower tariff to the consumers.

(e) Government of India has formulated the electricity Act, 2003 in which Thermal Power Generation has been delicensed and any generating company including private sector can set up power plant anywhere in the country subject to meeting the technical standards relating to connectivity with the grid. Hence, the interest of private sector has been adequately taken care of in the new Act.

Athirapilly Hydro Electric Project in Kerala

46. SHRI A. VIJAYARAGHAVAN:
SHRI K. CHANDRAN PILLAI:

Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the 'Athirapilly Hydro Electric Project' in Kerala has been submitted to the Centre for necessary clearances;

(b) if so, the details of the project; and

(c) the details regarding the present status of the project?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI P.M. SAYEED): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Athirappilly Hydro Electric Project envisages creation of reservoir in chalakkudy river by constructing a gravity dam 23m high located downstream of the existing Poringalkuthu Left Bank Power House and utilizing the water for power generation. The project envisages installation of two units of 80 MW each and one unit of 3 MW giving a total capacity of 163 MW.

The project was techno-economically cleared by CEA on 13.5.1996 at an estimated cost of Rs. 230.48 crores (including IDC of Rs. 40.84 crores) at 1994-95 price level. Forest clearance for diversion of 138.60 Ha of forest land and environment clearance were accorded on 16.12.1999 and 20.1.1998 respectively subject to certain conditions. However, the environmental clearance was suspended on 19.11.2001 pursuant to the judgment dated 17.10.2001 of the High Court of Kerala. The environment clearance is to be reconsidered based on the report of

public hearing. The Public Hearing was conducted on 6.2.2002. The panel recommended that a comprehensive Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) should be conducted and be made available to the public and a chance for public hearing should be provided before taking a decision on the application for environmental clearance.

The project authority has submitted the comprehensive EIA. It has been decided that a fresh public hearing needs to be carried out on the basis of the new comprehensive EIA. The State Government has been advised by Ministry of Environment & Forests on 23.11.2004 to approach the State Pollution Control Board for conducting the public hearing.

The Kerala State Electricity Board has submitted a revised/modified Detailed Project Report (DPR) on 2.9.2004 to Central electricity Authority with an estimated cost of Rs. 331.88 crores at 2003-04 price level for this project. The DPR was returned on 10.9.2004 due to non-furnishing/tieing up of essential inputs/details and drawings. Project authorities have stated that the hydrology and cost estimate components of the project will be revised and submitted shortly. The issue related to hydrology/water availability for the project is under study with Central Water Commission and the matter related to integrated study of Chalakkudy basin is of crucial importance. In order to take a view on the Hydrology/Water availability expeditiously, the project authorities have been invited for discussion by Central Water Commission on the integrated study of Chalakkudy Basin. The response from project authorities is awaited.

The clearance of the project by Central Electricity Authority can be granted after the project authorities submit the requisite inputs/details and drawings and after examination of the same.

Restarting Dabhol Power Project

†47. SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH MAJITHA:
DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI:

Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government had constituted a Committee of certain Ministers to suggest measures to restart the 2184 Megawatt Power Generating Project of Dabhol Power Company;

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.